

# “Building Our Sense of Community”

# Shelton State Courier

—Campus Newspaper—

New Series Vol. 2, Number 10

Shelton State Community College July 30, 1998-Aug. 24, 1998

## Visionland soothes people and boosts economy



*Young People with Cool Jobs! During a recent storm the lifeguard crew of Visionland took a brief break*  
Photo by Misty Holbrook

By Misty Holbrook and Sarah Nagy

On a hot July summer day, you and your friends are looking for something to do. So you think to yourselves, what about that new place, Visionland? Then one of your friends says, “How about Six Flags?” Now you have a problem: which one do you choose to go to?

The first major theme park to open in the United States in the last five years was Visionland, which opened this May. Six Flags has been open since 1967. There are many differences between the two because of the time that they’ve

been open.

The main difference that was found is that while Visionland is a water and theme park, Six Flags is mainly a theme park. While Visionland has a roller coaster, the Screaming Rampage, with its 56 mph ride and breath-taking 120-foot drop, Six Flags has the “Super Seven.” It consists of everything from The Great American Scream Machine with its 105-foot drop and 3,800 feet of track to the newest feature, Batman The Ride, with its ski-lift style track that soars with an estimated 4-G’s of speed through two vertical loops, two outside corkscrews and a zero gravity roll.

Another major difference is the distance which one must go to get to either theme park. While Visionland is approximately 30 minutes away, Six Flags is a long three and-a-half hour drive. As well as the driving, a daily ticket at Visionland is \$21. Six Flags costs \$34 a day. Season passes at Visionland are only \$60, compared to Six Flags \$79 ticket price.

Visionland is looking for its 300,000th visitor, who will win a

Visionland cont’d on pg. 3

## This college truly gets fired up

By Chris Mink

If you are ever in the atrium and happen to glance out the window behind the Shelton State campus and catch a large brick building engulfed in flames, don’t be alarmed. The fire is but a training exercise for future fire-fighters.

In March, the new Alabama Fire College campus at the back of Shelton State campus opened its doors to begin training paid and volunteer fire fighters, emergency personnel, rescue squad members, and industrial fire protection personnel.

Fire fighter training began throughout the state of Alabama in 1935, but the Alabama State Fire College was not created until 1955.

In 1975, the Alabama Fire Fighters Personnel Standards and Education act was passed by the Alabama Legislature. This act required formal fire fighting education and certification within the first 12 months of being employed by a for-pay fire department.

The Alabama Fire College is divided into six training divisions with assigned areas of responsibility. The resident division is responsible for fire service training and the classes taught at the fire college campus in Tuscaloosa. In 1997-98, the resident division trained more than 1,200 students.

The Field division of the AFC coordinates fire ser-

Fire cont’d on pg. 3



*The Alabama Fire College on the back-40 of Shelton State features the smoke building and the fire pit. The facility trains thousands per year*  
Photo by Misty Holbrook

*Sheltoniana Which Can Be Found Nowhere Else*

### Inside

Editorials, pg. 2  
Business Buc\$, pg. 4  
Movie review, pg. 6  
Shelton Food Court Interactive Corner, pg. 7  
Bulletin Board, pg. 7  
Shelton News...throughout

Look for the sales, discount coupons, and special notices in the Courier’s ads

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### Future Issues

The Courier looks forward to one more issue this academic year—in August. A new year’s worth of Couriers will begin in September. Let us know what you would like to know about Shelton by calling the publisher at 391-2278.



*Enjoying a Looney Summer—Lief Evans and Beth Key, both recent graduates of Shelton, are whooping it up this summer as cast members of Incident at Looney’s Tavern in Double Springs. Both Evans and Key have long entertainer resumes, with Key recently being selected as Miss Tuscaloosa Agriculture and as runner-up of Miss Shelton State.*





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## Are you thinking about a mass com major?

Shelton State is the right place to see how you might like to major in mass communication for your Bachelor's degree. We currently offer three courses that will give you a good taste of not only what a major in a mass communication field is like but will also give you a taste of the profession you may want to enter one day.

### MCM 100 Introduction to Mass Communication

This is the overview class that anyone who might be thinking of a mass com major will want to take right away. The course gives students a good introduction to each of the professional fields involved in the major: advertising, public relations, television, radio, motion pictures, magazines, newspapers, and books. The classes, however, are not a series of dry discussions. For each area, a professional in the field is brought in so students can get a first-hand account of what the life is like. The course is open to anyone who would like to find out more of how the mass media influence our daily lives. It is especially recommended for anyone who would like to examine the details of studying the exciting and growing field of mass communication.

### MCM 130 News Reporting

A career in any field of mass communication begins with writing. The bottom line in all mass communication careers is professionals' ability to express themselves with the written word. This class gives students practical and real hands-on experience in writing for an audience. Students learn the theories and terminology of journalistic writing while simultaneously practicing the craft and art of newspaper writing. By the end of the course, all students should see their bylines in print in the *Shelton State Courier*. With the skills learned in this one class, students will know the basics of how to write for any publication outlet. It's the perfect start to an exciting career as a professional writer.

## Six Flags is still the fav...

The wind whistling through your ears, body jerking from side to side, and then the sudden rush of adrenaline pumping through your veins when your body plummets to

the ground... These sensations can only be experienced on a roller coaster at an amusement park.

For years residents of Alabama have had to go out of state to experience these parks. Finally, we have an amusement park of our own, Visionland.

Since Visionland opened up in

May I have heard many stories about the park. I usually don't have much spare time because of my job and school to go and enjoy an amusement park. So I wondered how often do Shelton students attend amusement parks per year. I found that one-third (33%) of the students surveyed said they visited amusement parks twice a

year. Interestingly (20%) of the students were like me and did not visit amusement parks at all during the year.

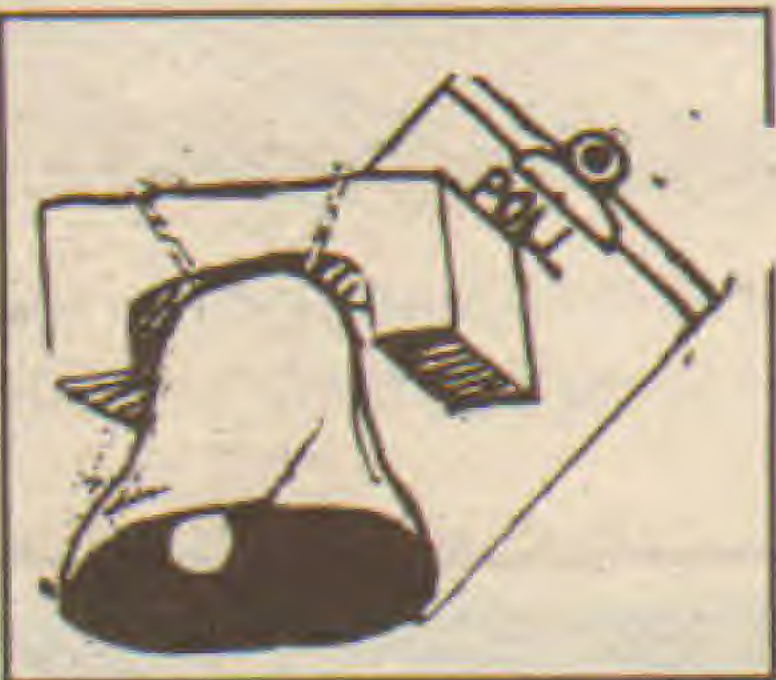
I wanted to find out what percentage of students had actually attended Visionland. Only 17% of the Shelton State students surveyed had been to Visionland. The low Shelton turnout can be attributed to

the park just opening up.

Curious, about the low turnout I wondered if Shelton students were even planning on visiting Visionland next. Amazingly, I found that only (37%) were planning on visiting Visionland next. The majority of students surveyed (53%) said they would go to Six Flags next.

## The Bell Poll

By: Louis Bell



# 17%

of Shelton State students have visited Visionland

#### How often do students attend amusement parks per year?

33%- 2 times  
20%- 1 time  
20%- none  
17%- 3 times  
7%- 5 times  
3%- 4 times

#### Of the students who have visited Visionland how did they like it?

60%- Very much  
20%- OK  
20%- Not at all

#### Which amusement park will students visit next?

53%- Six Flags  
37%- Visionland

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#### Shelton State Courier

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The *Shelton State Courier* is a "campus newspaper" written and produced with the help of students.

Among other functions, it is intended as a vehicle for student

expression and all students are urged to participate with submissions of written and artistic material.

The college seeks to fulfill the statement for academic freedom in working with the students in the production of this paper:

"The college seeks to provide an atmosphere conducive to open and honest intellectual inquiry in any college forum which is appropriate for dialogue and student participation. The students should feel free to exercise the right to dissent within limits of decorum and good taste."

All publications are subject to review by the Publications Action Group, which has been delegated the responsibility to review all college publications for content and accuracy.



**Visionland cont'd from pg. 1**

1998 Chevy Camaro. The park's 500,000th visitor will win a 1998 Chevy S-10 pickup truck.

Along with giving away gifts, Visionland is helping raise money for local charities, such as the 102-lap charity ride on the Rampage benefiting Magic Moments, sponsored by WOW 102.5 FM. The park also has buy-one-get-one-free days on some Wednesdays. These are just a few of the promotions that are running throughout the summer.

The Bible verse from Proverbs 29:18 "Where there is no vision, the people perish" gave Mayor Larry Langford the inspiration for Visionland. He had a vision nine years ago to build a theme park benefiting the cities that would help fund the

project. These 11 cities are Adamsville, Bessemer, Birmingham, Brighton, Fairfield, Hueytown, Lipscomb, in Bessemer. This makes the park bigger than Six Flags was when it first opened, and by all accounts the opening has been a



*The Great American Scream Machine at Six Flags still rules in most minds*  
Photo by Misty Holbrook

Maytown, North Johns, Sylvan Springs, and Vance. The corporation of Visionland purchased 70 acres of land from U.S. Steel

success. As one guest from Centerpoint said "It was nicer than I anticipated."

As well as expanding each

year, Visionland plans to lease some of the property to businesses for an outlet mall, an indoor golf course, and an entertainment zone consisting of a skating rink, bowling lanes, and a movie theater. These additions are to help the community benefit from the park and also bring more jobs into the community.

Employment for Visionland is already over 500 seasonal positions, which consists mostly of teens, and 60 permanent positions. The park hopes to one day employ as many, if not more, people than Six Flags which employs over 2,500 seasonal positions, making it the largest employer of teens in the southeast.

Shops and rides are arranged according to four themes that run throughout the park,

which is currently looking for designs that will represent each of the four themes. Steel Waters is a seven-acre water park offering visitors tube slides, interactive water play and a seemingly endless river attraction set amid industrial elements representative of Bessemer's steel heritage. Tower Works is an interactive area with pumps, geysers, buckets and water gags for all ages. A giant bucket dumps 1,000 gallons on the entire structure every 10 minutes. A PR representative for the park said, "People will stand under the bucket forever waiting for it to dump water on them. They love it."

The Mine Shaft is four

**Visionland cont'd on pg. 7**

**Fire cont'd from pg. 1**

vice training at sites throughout the state. This division allows people from various communities who are unable to attend the fire college campus to participate in required training courses.

The planning and finance division works in cooperation with the Executive Staff in staff recruitment. This division is also responsible for updating Alabama Fire College policy and procedure manuals.

The Industrial training division works under the control of the Resident Division. Through the efforts of this division, training courses can be offered to industry and business clients around Alabama.

The Fire College Curriculum Division was founded in February of 1992. It brought the AFC training qualifications to the level of the National Fire Protection Association, an upgrade of performance standards. The Curriculum Division of the AFC is responsible for creating all of the instructional materials used by the certification courses such as teaching outlines, study guides, workbooks and audio-visual materials.

The last division in the Program is Emergency Medicine. This division was transferred from the University of Alabama to the Fire College in 1994. This

program is responsible for training Emergency Medical Technicians from the basic to the paramedic level.

The new Fire college adjacent to the Shelton Martin campus consists of three buildings. The Administrative building in-

cludes the classrooms and offices. The smoke building and the burn pit are the interesting facilities where the training exercises take place.

So have the new location and added programs impacted fire service training? Deputy Di-

rector of Administration Tommy Taylor says, "The new facility is much larger and better equipped than our previous site. The larger classrooms are much more conducive to learning and the improved drill fields area allows us

to use more advanced and realistic training scenarios. This facility has been very successful in our continuing fire training."

Fire College is just like

**Fire cont'd on pg. 7**

## Personal Banking Is Just Around The Corner From Shelton State.



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## BUSINESS BUC\$

### Sometimes eating out is just so stupid

Second in a three-part series of encouraging words from the world of credit and investment

By Mark G. Sullivan V.P. and Chief Operating officer of the Bank of Tuscaloosa

Now let's suppose Manny is in love with the almighty credit card. He loves to buy things with plastic! It gives him a feeling of power to be able to flash his Platinum Gold Card at a restaurant, and impress his date. It tells the world, "Hey, I'm worthy of credit."

For one year, Manny (who earns \$2,000 per month) spends \$2,100 per month with the help of his credit card. At the end of a year, he has a balance of \$1,200 on his card, and now sees the error of his ways. Well, what is it going to take to get him out of the hole? First, to pay out the \$1,200 balance in one year, assuming the card is accruing interest at 18.0% APR (as many of them do), it will require a monthly payment of \$110. Manny must now adjust to a life style of \$1,890/month disposable income (\$2,000 - \$110) versus the \$2,100 to which he has become accustomed!

So why would a banker, whose organization profits from the use of credit, be

discouraging it? I do not believe that credit cards are inherently evil, but the tendency is there for a lot of people to use them in a manner which is inconsistent with the goal of achieving financial freedom. Any banker will tell you that his or her best loan customers are those who use credit with prudence and responsibility. Credit cards are great as a matter of convenience. If you make the habit of paying off the balance of the card every month, it will help you avoid the credit card trap Manny fell into, and keep you from paying all that interest as well.

A great alternative that provides the convenience of plastic without the surprise of a monthly credit card balance is a debit card. A debit card works like a check in that each charge is deducted directly from your checking account. Of course, you must register charges as you incur them or else you may become overdrawn, which is not good for you and will not make your bank happy. However, the debit card will help you avoid the habit of spending money you don't have.

**Next Issue:** Mark G. Sullivan goes beyond telling you how to stay out of debt; he'll tell you how to gain wealth...

Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer ... *anywhere in the world!*

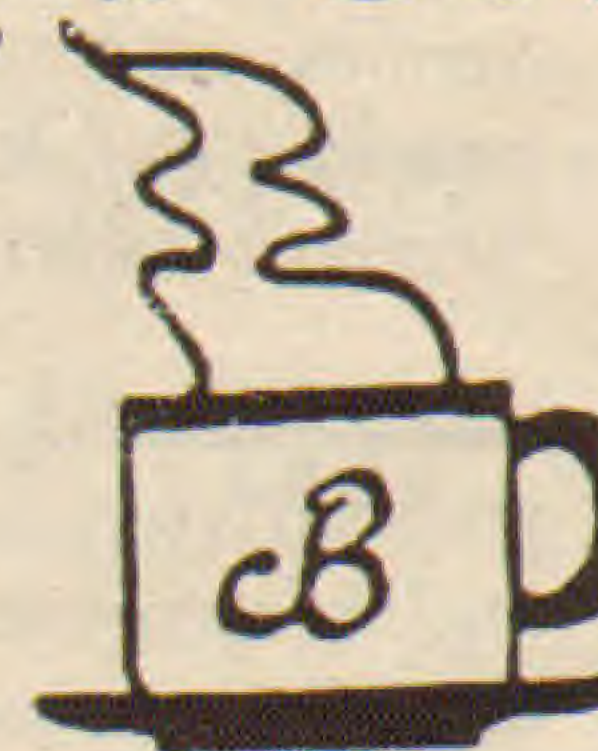


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## Webmaster program is certified by the state

Shelton State recently received notification from the Alabama Department of Secondary education that the college's webmaster program has been reclassified as a 26-semester-hour certificate program, effective fall Semester 1998.

This past spring the College offered three Webmaster classes, according to Shelton President Tom Umphrey. "As a certificate program," Dr. Umphrey said, "the college will now be able to present a formal award and certification to students who successfully complete the Webmaster program."

Since the Webmaster program will be part of the college's computer science curriculum, students will also have the option of using the webmaster as one of the courses leading to an associate in applied science degree in computer science," Umphrey said.

According to Dr. Fred Gainous, Chancellor of the Alabama College System, "Shelton has an existing Associate in Applied Science (AAS) and a Certificate in Computer science and the addition of the Webmaster short certificate represents a substantial commitment to develop one of the most techni-

cally advanced computer programs in the West Alabama region."

"It is our understanding that the primary offering will be housed on the C.A. Fredd Campus," Gainous added.

The webmaster program provides students with the skills they will need to conceptualize and design Web pages and publications. It will also provide them with the knowledge and skills they will need to author HTML documents, manipulate images, and construct and optimize graphics, image maps, sound, motion, forms, and interface options for web pages.

Other skills offered through the program include managing web pages, updating information, and interfacing with other information systems. As part of the program, students will also learn how to select and run a server, set up a site, select and create web tools, and maintain a small-to-medium-size Web site.

Brad Moore is Webmaster for the college and serves as the instructor of the program. For more information on the Webmaster program, call (205) 391-2640.

*"As a certificate program," Dr. Umphrey said, "the college will now be able to present a formal award and certification to students who successfully complete the Webmaster program."*

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he stopped by on his  
way to Atlanta, John...

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## Shelton Alumni to kick off 1998-99 membership drive

The Shelton State Alumni Association will kick off its 1998-99 membership drive with a party on Friday, Aug. 7.

The party will be held from 5-7 p.m. at Barrett's Brewpub and Eatery located on the corner of Greensboro and University Boulevard.

Any member of the faculty and staff of the college or any student who is interested in joining the organization is encouraged to attend. For more information on the party, call the Alumni Office, 391-2221 or 391-2252.

## Shelton grades available by Internet at [getgrades.com](http://getgrades.com)

A couple of years ago, Shelton State Community College contacted VoiceFX Corporation of Conshohocken, Pa. to distribute the student grades over the telephone. This has proven to be a very effective means of delivering the information to the students.

Starting with the spring semester of 1998, VoiceFX corporation is also providing the student grades on the internet. This option is just as safe and secure as the telephone delivery.

To access the Internet site, you will need to enter [WWW.getgrades.com](http://WWW.getgrades.com) on your browser. On the introduction screen you will be asked to enter the last four numbers of the College's 1-

888 number, this is 7722. You will then be asked for your Student ID (your Social Security Number) and your Date of Birth. If you want to use something other than your date of birth, you will need to contact someone in the Admissions Office before the grades are released.

Spring grades will be available until about Aug. 7. The Summer grades, Split term and full term, are scheduled for release on Aug. 14.

Remember, there are now two ways to receive your grades: 1-888-391-SSCC or [WWW.getgrades.com](http://WWW.getgrades.com).



## Plan for your future with... Electronics

If you are interested in a career with a great future, you might want to think electronics. *Electronics* is one of the fastest growing career fields in the United States Today. At Shelton State Community College our electronics technology department offers classes during the day and evening. Registration for fall semester is August 19 and 20. Fall classes begin Monday, August 24. Call 391-2460 or 391-2232 today to find out how you can get started.

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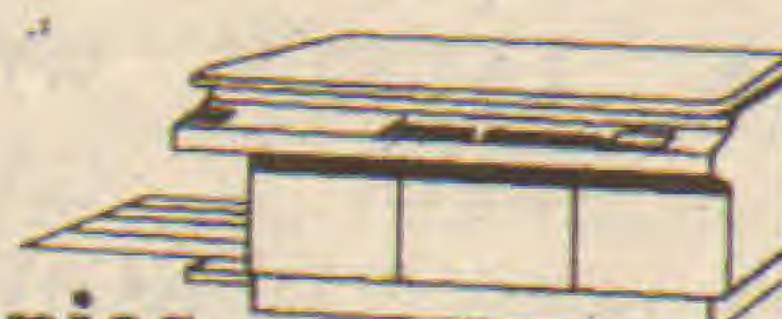
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If you are majoring in any of the mass communication fields (journalism, advertising, broadcast & film, etc.) you should know that experience is what counts. No matter what your intended field is, you can get the experience you need to get a job by working on *The Shelton State Courier*, a professional newspaper about the college and its surrounding community.

Get the experience you need for the job you really want.

## Roberts reviews...



By Brian Roberts

## Saving Private Ryan

War is hell. That is exactly what Steven Spielberg's new film *Saving Private Ryan* demonstrates, in a way that has never been shown in film. With this film, Spielberg has created a realism that is both shocking and horrific. Calling this film "The year's best" would not be giving justice to its impact. The only film made this decade that has the emotional power reached in *Saving Private Ryan* was Spielberg's 1993 classic *Schindler's List*.

The film is set in 1944 and begins with the Omaha Beach invasion by U.S. troops on the Normandy coast during World War II. A U.S. paratrooper, Private James Ryan, is known to be behind enemy lines. Within the last week, his three brothers have been killed in action, and the U.S. government decides to send a team of eight men into German-held territory to find him and send him home.

The cast of the film is highlighted by two-time Oscar winner (*Philadelphia*, *Forrest Gump*) Tom Hanks. In the past five years, Hanks has shown us the full range of acting, moving from comedy to drama, and even mixing the two. His performance in this film is simply the best performance of his career. He plays Captain John Miller, the leader of the team sent to find Ryan.

Hanks was at first hesitant to take the role. He and Spielberg knew, however, that Hanks was the one actor that could pull this role off to perfection, and a deal was finally made.

Supporting Hanks is a group comprised of mainly young actors. A few veterans make appearances, Ted Danson (*Cheers*) and Dennis Farina (*Get Shorty*, *Out of Sight*), and Tom Sizemore (*Heat*) plays Hank's second in command. It is the young actors who control the plot of the film. The biggest name belongs to Oscar nominee Matt Damon (*Good Will Hunting*), but because Damon is playing Private Ryan, he only appears in the last part

of the movie. It is actors like Giovanni Ribisi (*Suburbia*), Edward Burns (*The Brothers McMullen*), Adam Goldberg (*Dazed and Confused*) and Jeremy Davies (*Spanking the Monkey*)--who might just get an Oscar nomination--that give the film the character-driven emotion that allows it to be so effective.

What makes the film so poignant is its realism. Much like *Schindler's List*, it was originally given an NC-17 rating for violence. In both cases, however, an R rating was given without any film being edited. Roger Ebert said, "This is not your father's war movie, this is your father's war." That sums up the entire film. Roughly one half of the film's nearly three hours is spent during battle scenes, in which nothing is held back. People are shot, body parts are blown off, and even entire bodies blown to pieces. With beautiful cinematography from Janusz Kaminski (*Amistad*), the battle scenes almost look as if they are news-reel footage shot during the 1940's.

With *Saving Private Ryan*, Steven Spielberg has further established himself as the greatest film maker currently working. He has been directing films for three decades now, and in each of those decades has created at least two movies widely considered to be great: 1970's-*Jaws*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, 1980's-*Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *E.T. The Extra Terrestrial*, 1990's-*Schindler's List*, *Saving Private Ryan*. Expect to see this film not only do very well at the box office, but to also do very well when the awards are being handed out at the beginning of next year.

*Saving Private Ryan* shows daily at Regal's Fox 12 Cinemas at 12:30 P.M., 1:15 p.m., 3:45 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m., and 10:15 p.m. Rated R for language and extreme graphic violence. 168 minutes.



## BULLETIN BOARD

By Kimberly Davis

Students should be aware that come the end of summer, there will be a few changes in school policy.

First of all, the last day for normal registration is Aug. 20. Any registrations after this date will be considered late registration and subject to a \$25 late fee.

For students on scholarships and on tight budgets, this could be disastrous. Also, students should know that the hourly rate for class registration will be increased from \$47.50 last fall to \$52 this fall. Again, this could easily disrupt a tight budget. So this fall don't be caught unawares.

During scheduling for the fall semester many students noticed the changes in course numbers and names for the math classes. These changes were made to make transfers to four-year much easier for students.

Camille Cochrane, head of the math department, explains that the changes put Shelton in line with all the other colleges in the state.

Math faculty members urge students to be careful about course numbers and pre-requisites in this transitional time.

This fall, students may be offered the opportunity to save a little money on their food budgets. The Shelton food court is working on meal plans for those who frequent the food court. At this point, there are plans for three plans at \$100, \$150 and \$200 each, saving the students anywhere from 14-16%. The plans include one meat, two vegetables, a roll and a drink—up to \$4 in value.

### Fire cont'd from pg. 3

any other college, only hotter. There is much more going on in that building behind our campus than one would think at first glance.

Rick Rogers, assistant to Shelton President Umphrey, said, "We enjoy an excellent relationship with the Fire College and are very proud of their national reputation.

"The fire college trains over 13,000 individuals each year from throughout Alabama and many states in the country. So many of us benefit from the training there—not just the Fire College students."

### Visionland cont'd from pg. 3

completely enclosed dark tubes with dizzying twists and turns leading to a huge splash pool. The Warrior River is a three-foot deep water-jet-propelled river, and Quarry Bay is an interactive area for children.

Overall, Visionland is, by consensus opinion, a good theme park such as Six Flags. As Birmingham continues to grow, Bessemer will soon expand and be large enough to house a major theme and water park as well as pull-in visitors from surrounding states.

As one Visionland guest from Alabaster said, "This is one tourist attraction that will definitely grow."

## Shelton Food Court "Interactive Newspaper" Corner

### You tell me, is it a "sin" to be gay?

I was born a Southern Baptist and continued in that faith for 24 years.

Yet I do not believe that homosexuality is inherently evil—in the parlance of organized religion, in other words, a "sin."

Yes, I am quite aware of what the Bible says toward homosexuality. I just chose not to believe in its opinion, because after all, that's what the ethics of the Bible are—a collection of opinions of how we should live our lives, written by only a few select men, a couple of thousand years ago, in a different time and a different culture.

My choice not to believe in certain parts of what the Bible says is done in much the same way that different denominations take the parts they agree with and leave out the parts that they don't. It's no different, and society has been doing it for long, long time.

I think that the gay life-style is a personal matter that a person should be able to deal with themselves.

Gay people are not weird or different than anyone else in society. They make choices about the things they want in their lives. The ability to think and reason is inherent in all of us. How then can searching out what you are curious about and want in life be evil—be a sin?

Many years ago it was considered a sin to say the world was round. Years after that it was considered a sin to say that the Earth wasn't the center of the universe.

In both of those cases, though, human reason prevailed due to the courage and perseverance of people like Galileo, Newton and Columbus, who went ahead and committed their so-called sins, and we've all prospered since.

Perhaps we are on the frontier of a new understanding of human biology, and only a few have the courage to look over the edge.

The sin I feel in my gut is to believe in something only for the purpose of not having to find out what the truth is. Not having to work to understand things is a lazy person's way out of dealing with the facts of nature.

We all have curiosities about the world we live in and we seek out answers to these things. Science strives to understand the world and the creatures in it—neither asserting answers nor building walls against things it doesn't know.

Our moral responsibility as a nation shouldn't be governed solely on what personal feelings someone has but in what we as Americans all know: all people under God are created equal and deserve each and every right afforded to the next person.

Living should be a right not a struggle. Everyone should have a place in society and everyone should have a say in that society.

To exclude any one person or group, because you don't understand their biology feels to me like something lazy and inherently evil—a sin.

I am not a homosexual, yet I cannot condemn those who are. That's how I feel. But now you tell me: Is it a "sin" to be gay?

By James A. Crawford II

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